

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Pike's Peak

AND/OR COMMON

Pike's Peak

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Pike National Forest

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Colorado Springs

VICINITY OF

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Colorado

08

El Paso

041

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT  
☐ BUILDING(S)  
☐ STRUCTURE  
☒ SITE  
☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC  
☐ PRIVATE  
☒ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS  
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED  
☐ UNOCCUPIED  
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED  
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED  
☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE ☐ MUSEUM  
☐ COMMERCIAL ☐ PARK  
☐ EDUCATIONAL ☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
☒ ENTERTAINMENT ☐ RELIGIOUS  
☐ GOVERNMENT ☐ SCIENTIFIC  
☐ INDUSTRIAL ☐ TRANSPORTATION  
☐ MILITARY *OTHER: Recreational  
Special Use Permit Area*

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

United States Forest Service (continued)

STREET &amp; NUMBER

300 Fillmore Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Colorado Springs

VICINITY OF

Colorado 80901

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Registry of Deeds, El Paso County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

27 E. Varmijo Avenue

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Colorado Springs

Colorado 80901

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT      ☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ GOOD      ☐ RUINS  
☐ FAIR      ☐ UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED  
☐ ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

☐ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Pike's Peak is a natural mountain formation. The only changes which have occurred have been through the efforts of man to exploit the natural resource. With the founding of Colorado Springs in 1872 by General William J. Palmer and the concentration of over 40,000 inhabitants in the Cripple Creek-Victor Mining District, the Peak became the major source of wood used in mining, as fuel, for railroad ties and building in general. Because of the indiscriminate cutting of trees, the Peak became quite barren. This condition has been greatly remedied through the efforts of the United States Forest Service of the Department of Agriculture, who during the 1920's and 30's created a massive program of reforestation.

The only other alterations in the condition of the mountain occurred with the construction of tourist facilities. These include the access road, first built in the early 1900's as the carriage road and improved in 1915 by Spencer Penrose. This 20 mile stretch is presently used for access to the summit. The rise in tourist traffic necessitated construction of the modern summit house. This impressive modernistic facility (see accompanying photographs) appears intrusive to the total atmosphere of the summit. However, because of the great number of people who visit the mountain, it is a necessity. Likewise, the government has constructed a medical facility on the Peak for observation of characteristics of physical duress at high altitudes. Right of way was granted the Manitou and Pike's Peak Railway Company for the construction of a railroad to the summit in the early 20th century. Like the other facilities, the railroad has plans for expansion to accommodate the expected increase in tourist traffic. It is important to note that none of the above mentioned intrusive elements contribute to the national significance of the historic landmark.

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

### PERIOD

### AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

|   |   |  |   |  |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC          | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING                | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499            | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC    | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION                      | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW                    | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599            | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE            | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS                         | <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE             | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699            | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE           | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION                         | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY               | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799            | <input type="checkbox"/> ART                    | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING                       | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC                  | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY             | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900-                | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS         | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY                          | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT    | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)     |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION                         |   |  |

SPECIFIC DATES 1806

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Long known to Indians and the Spaniards of the area, but first observed in 1806 by an American, Zebulon Montgomery Pike, Pike's Peak has become one of the best known and most frequently visited mountains in the United States. Pike who had set out in an exploration of the southern tier of the lands acquired in the Louisiana Purchase, first saw the peak from a point near present day Pueblo, Colorado. Continuing on to the peak, Pike attempted to climb the mountain's slope but found it impossible because of deep snows. Pike gave up the attempt believing that the mountain would never be scaled. The Peak was scaled some 20 years later by Dr. James a member of the Long expedition. Since that time the Peak has been the object of numerous activities.

The history of Pike's Peak might be summed up as five periods. These periods include: exploration, from 1806 through 1880; exploitation, during the 1880's and 1890's; restoration and conservation in the 1920's and 30's; and recreation on the late 40's and 50's. Recently, since the 1960's, the United States Forest Service has adopted the concept of multiple use. This use basically centers on the exploitation of the natural area by an avid tourist trade as well as the maintenance of the natural forest lands.

The majority of the lands on Pike's Peak are owned by the Forest Service. However, in years past, certain parcels of the property have been given to private entrepreneurs for development as well as the city of Colorado Springs, which maintains the summit house and the access road.

### History

Pike's Peak is probably the best-known and the most visited mountain in the United States. It is quite an impressive mountain. When Zebulon Pike made his historic expedition to the Upper Arkansas River and into New Mexico in 1806 he, on November 15, first viewed the mountain which was named for him at a point near Las Animas, Colorado. When the party reached the site of modern Pueblo on the 24th, Pike and several others, leaving the main party, set out for the Peak. In attempting to ascend the Peak, Pike and his followers encountered deep snow so were forced to descend and return to their main camp.

The first actual known ascent of Pike's Peak was made in 1820 by members of the Stephen H. Long Expedition. This expedition, after ascending the Main and South Platte, reached a point near present Colorado Springs. At that place Long directed a party under the leadership of Dr. Edwin James to ascend the Peak. On July 13, the small party set out and on the afternoon of the 14th, reached the

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Thwaites, Reuben G., Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains Performed in the Years 1819, 1820, (Cleveland, 1905), 4 volumes.

Coues, Elliott, ed., The Expeditions of Zebulon Montgomery Pike, (New York, 1905).

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 38 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,3 4,9,6,4,8,0 4,2,9,9,0,0,0  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
C 1,3 4,9,5,9,2,0 4,2,9,8,7,6,0

B 1,3 4,9,6,4,1,0 4,2,9,8,6,8,0  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
D 1,3 4,9,6,0,4,0 4,2,9,9,1,3,0

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Pike's Peak is a natural mountain formation whose historical significance comes from its association with Zebulon Pike. The Peak is only one part of a massive mountain chain. It in itself is more than 20 miles in diameter. Pike never reached the peak of the mountain though this was his original objective. The mountain was scaled some 20 years after the first attempt. Pike's Peak is not the tallest mountain in Colorado and is only one of over thirty mountains whose elevation exceeds 14,000 feet. It is, however, a most impressive mountain when

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|-------|------|--------|------|

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|-------|------|--------|------|

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Joseph Scott Mendinghall, Historian

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street NW.

CITY OR TOWN

Washington

DATE

12/1/75

TELEPHONE

STATE

D.C.

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL \_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_

LOCAL \_\_\_\_

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

hereby evaluated according to the

Landmark

Designated: 7/4/61...  
date

Boundary Certified: 5-13-76  
DATE

Chief, Hist. & date

Arch. Surveys

DATE

Boundary Certified: 1/13/76  
DATE

Director, OHP date

### FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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Pike's Peak

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Property Ownership

Provision was made for the city of Colorado Springs to operate facilities, inclusive of the access road and Summit House on the Peak.

Mayor and City Council  
City Hall  
Colorado Springs, Colorado

The cog railroad is owned by the

Manitou and Pike's Peak Railway Company  
P.O. Box 2378  
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80901

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summit. Dr. James described it as follows:

It was about 4 o'clock P.M. when the party arrived on the summit. In our way we had attempted to cross a large field of snow, which occupied a deep ravine, extending down about half a mile from the top, on the south-eastern side of the peak. This was, however, found impassable, being covered with a thin ice, not sufficiently strong to bear the weight of a man. We had not been long on the summit when we were rejoined by the man who had separated from us, near the outskirts of the timber. He had turned aside and lain down to rest, and afterwards pursued his journey by a different route.

From the summit of the peak, the view towards the north-west and south-west is diversified with innumerable mountains, all white with snow; and on some of the more distant it appears to extend down to their bases. Immediately under our feet, on the west, lay the narrow valley of the Arkansas, which we could trace running towards the north-west, probably more than 60 miles.

On the north side of the peak was an immense mass of snow and ice. The ravine in which it lay terminated in a woodless and apparently fertile valley, lying west of the first great ridge, and extending far towards the north. This valley must undoubtedly contain a considerable branch of the Platte. In a part of it, distant probably 30 miles, the smoke of a large fire was distinctly seen, supposed to indicate the encampment of a party of Indians.

To the east lay the great plain, rising as it receded, until in the distant horizon it appeared to mingle with the sky. A little want of transparency in the atmosphere, added to the great elevation from which we saw the plain, prevented our distinguishing the small inequalities of the surface. The Arkansas, with several of its tributaries, and some of the branches of the Platte, could be distinctly traced as on a map, by the line of timber along their courses.

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Pike's Peak

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On the south the mountain is continued, having another summit, (supposed to be that ascended by Captain Pike,) at the distance of eight or ten miles.

During the 1880's, the Federal Government placed a military installation atop the Peak, but found it impossible to maintain because all supplies had to be packed to the top of the summit. When this facility was closed, the finding of gold in Cripple Creek led to the exploration of the Peak for ore. With little success, operations soon ceased and the Peak again was returned to its natural state. Tremendous damage had been done.

An interest had been created around the turn of the century in the Peak as a natural phenomenon and it had gained a popularity as a tourist attraction. The construction of a carriage road as well as the cog railroad brought a new use to the Peak. Pike's Peak thus became the number one mountain attraction for tourists. This situation has been maintained since. Presently there are annually over 800,000 (minimum estimate) visitors to the Peak. Access is made by foot, the road, which is operated by the city of Colorado Springs at a cost of \$2.50 per person, or the cog railroad operated by the Manitou and Pike's Peak Railway Company.

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looked at from the east or south on the eastern plains of the state. There is no historical justification for the placement of a line on the mountain to establish a boundary. The base of the mountain stretches from the Cripple Creek Historic Mining District to Manitou Springs, Colorado, a densely populated region. For these reasons, compounded by the fact that the summit was since the very beginning the object of numerous efforts, the 14,000 foot elevation seems most logical as a means of identifying the most important aspect of the mountain.

From any point at 14,000 feet continue in a line around the summit of Pike's Peak, following the 14,000 foot elevation line to that point of origin. This area is indicated on an accompanying U.S.G.S. map.